

REMARKS

Applicants submit that by the present Amendment and Remarks, this Application is placed in condition for immediate allowance. As will be apparent, no new matter has been introduced and no new issue has been generated, as the amendment to claim 7, the only amended claim, is consistent with the Examiner's suggestion to overcome a formalistic objection. Accordingly entry of the present Amendment and favorable consideration are solicited pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §116.

Claims 1 through 14 are pending in this Application. Claim has 7 been amended. Care has been exercised to avoid the introduction of new matter. Adequate descriptive support for the present Amendment should be apparent throughout the originally-filed disclosure as, for example, page 8 of the written description of the specification. As previously noted, the amendment to claim 7 is consistent with the Examiner's suggestion. Applicant submits that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue.

Claim Objection.

The Examiner objected to claim 7, identifying a perceived ambiguity, and courteously suggesting remedial language.

In response claim 7 has been amended consistent with the Examiner's suggestion, thereby overcoming the stated basis for the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 7 is solicited.

Claims 1 through 4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) for lack of novelty as evidenced by Li et al. ("Li").

Claims 1, 3, and 5 through 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for obviousness predicated upon Li.

Each of the above-identified rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is traversed. Specifically, the reference to Li is not prior art with respect to the claimed invention.

The filing date of Li is May 27, 2004. Submitted herewith is a certified English language translation of the foreign priority document JP2004-008466, filed on January 15, 2004, which antedates the filing date of Li. Accordingly Li is not prior art with respect to the claimed invention. Withdrawal of the above- identified rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is therefore solicited.

Based upon the foregoing, it is apparent that the imposed objection and rejections have been overcome, and that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is therefore solicited. If any unresolved issues remain, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney at 703-519-9954 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 504213 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully Submitted,

DITTHAVONG MORI & STEINER, P.C.

/Arthur J. Steiner/

Arthur J. Steiner
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 26106

918 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel. (703) 519-9951
Fax (703) 519-9958